EXCISE

589

P780150-2018

October 4, 1978

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY John Simms DATE 2-26-81
PORTIONS DENIED AS INDICATED

Dear Senator Cranston:

I refer to your inquiry of September 7, on behalf of [redacted] and a recent telephone conversation between Ms. Eileen M. O'Kane and Ms. Lorraine Huang of your staff concerning the People's Agricultural Temple in Guyana. E 86

In order to be of assistance to the many American citizens within their consular jurisdiction, officers of the American Embassy in Georgetown, Guyana periodically visit the People's Temple. These officers have been free to move about the grounds and speak privately with individuals. It is the opinion of these officers, reinforced by conversations with local officials who deal with the People's Temple, that it is improbable anyone is being held in bondage. In general, the people appear healthy, adequately fed and housed and satisfied with their lives on what is a large farm. Many do hard, physical labor but there is no evidence of persons being forced to work beyond their capacity or against their will.

Should the families [redacted] represents wish information about their relatives in the People's Temple, they should provide the relatives' names, dates and places of birth to the American Embassy, 31 Main Street, Georgetown, Guyana. During the Embassy officer's next visit to the People's Temple, he will attempt to speak privately with the individuals in question, convey their families' concern and submit reports of his findings. E 86

With regard to [redacted] specific concern of possible tampering with the mail, you may wish to direct an inquiry to the United States Postal Service. E 86

Honorable Alan Cranston
229 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

ROSE for XDEF

If you have further questions, please contact Ms. Ellen M. O'Kane in the Welfare/Verification Unit of the Office of Special Consular Services on telephone 632-3225.

Sincerely,

Douglas J. Bennet, Jr.
Assistant Secretary
for Congressional Relations

Enclosure:

Correspondence returned.

CA:SCS:EMO'Kane:ghp:wp 9-28-78
x25225 #140-1880

Clearances: SCS-Mr. Belt
SCS-Mr. Dobrenchuk
SCS-Ms. Davi
CA-Ms. Mahon
H-Mr. Grizak